



M. JODI RELL
GOVERNOR

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

Testimony of Governor M. Jodi Rell

**Presented to the
Judiciary Committee
March 22, 2010**

**Regarding HB 5030,
*AAC the Forfeiture of Money and Property Related to Child Sexual Exploitation and
Human Trafficking and the Possession of Child Pornography***

Chairpersons McDonald and Lawlor, Ranking Members Kissel and O'Neill, and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 5030: An Act Concerning the Forfeiture of Money and Property Related to Child Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking and the Possession of Child Pornography.

It is difficult for most law abiding citizens to understand that there are those in our society who are involved in child pornography. We have heard the excuses from mere curiosity to diagnosis of problem sexual behavior and addiction. Even more upsetting is the fact that there are those in our society who profit in the sale of pornographic images involving children, which is sadly a multimillion dollar a year industry.

We have found in our battle against illicit drugs that we must bring the battle not just to the addicted drug user but also to those who supply illicit drugs. Similarly, this bill seeks to bring the battle against child pornography to those that supply these disturbing images and profit from their sale.

Connecticut has had an existing statutory procedure (C.G.S. 54-36h) in place since 1986 which provides for the forfeiture of assets including moneys and property from those involved in the illegal sale of narcotics. Thus the state has made a public policy decision to seize assets illegally obtained in committing crimes that have devastating social impact. This proposed bill would expand the use of the tool of asset forfeiture in response to other crimes that also have devastating social impact, the sexual exploitation of children and trafficking in human beings.

The exact size and extent of the crimes outlined in this bill is not entirely known. The FBI estimated in a 2006 report on Human Trafficking that yearly profits of nearly 9 million dollars are attributed to human trafficking around the world. The report goes on to estimate that 15,000 to 18,000 people are trafficked each year in the United States. Likewise, in a February 2006 report from Top Ten REVIEWS, (a publisher of Internet reviews), it was estimated that there are 100,000 websites offering child pornography with profits estimated at three billion dollars annually.

As the criminal element continues to seek new ways to utilize computer technologies and the internet to commit and aid in the commission of crimes, the criminal justice system needs to have the training, tools and personnel to recognize and respond to these changes. This bill seeks to address this and would provide some funding to the criminal justice community derived from the assets realized from these crimes.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important public safety issue.